



## **Regional Service Council Minutes Region #14**

**Meeting Date:** 4/18/06

**Meeting Location:** Bartholomew County DCS

**Council Members Present:** Heather Mollo, Mark Loyd, Dennis Carmichael, Helen Jackson, Ruth Alewine, Jack Tandy, Mary Medler, Alfredo Salazar, Michael Williams

**Council Members Absent:** LaDonna Simpson, Cindy Doyle-Winslow

**Others In Attendance:** Kim Lahman (Midwest Center for Youth and Families), David P. Meadows (Cummins Behavioral Health), Dave Spencer (White's Family Services), Heather Barrett (The Villages), Gayle Green (Johnson County DCS), Suzanne Klotzsche (Johnson County DCS), Jim Poulos (George Jr/Preventative Aftercare), Susie Ross (Preventative Aftercare), Keith Weedman (Bartholomew County DCS), Carol Gwin (Bartholomew County DCS), Janice Klein (Children's Bureau—Indianapolis), Julie Stewart (Children's Bureau—Indianapolis), Sarah Sullivan (Fountain Consulting—Shelbyville), MB Lippold (DCS—Central Office), Penny Pitcock (Dodson, Shively and Associates), and Celia Leaird (DCS—Central Office)

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Called to Order at:** 8:32 AM

- 1. First Order of Business Summary of Discussion:** Family Case Managers and/or Family Case Supervisors with the most tenure in the region were recognized as follows: Scott Wingo (Shelby County—8 years), Suzanne Klotzsche (Johnson County—23 years), Carol Gwin (Bartholomew County—25 years), Nancy Schoenbein (Jennings County—19 years), and Karen Munson (Jackson County—8 years). Regional Manager Alewine presented gifts of recognition to these employees.
- 2. Second Order of Business Summary of Discussion:** Regional Manager Alewine reported on the region's negotiations regarding the new Intensive Family Preservation/Reunification Services (IFPS/RS) which are effective July 1, 2006. The region interviewed 3 providers, and two were selected. Quinco was selected for the southern counties of Jennings and Jackson,

while Lifeline was selected for Bartholomew, Shelby and Johnson Counties. The region will be meeting following the RSC meeting to discuss the Community Partners for Child Safety program with Children's Bureau.

3. **Third Order of Business Summary of Discussion:** MB Lippold from DCS Central Office conducted a Q/A session with the group as follows:

- A question was raised about the structure/direction of the RSC, and a comment was made regarding the role of the RSC in future proposal scoring. MB discussed the IFPS/RS programs and their evidence-based approach, and while they are intensive services, safety of children remains paramount. She stated that Regional Service Councils must monitor the models followed. She indicated that residential placements are increasing, and we all need to make attempts/develop programming to not only minimize the #s of placements made, but to minimize length of stays, as well. She briefly discussed the Practice Model to be implemented Statewide as well as the Vision, Mission, and Values of DCS and its goal to maintain as many children as possible with their families.
- MB asked what the RSC needs to feel more comfortable, and responses included "more collaboration with partners" and a statement that some Probation Departments are already using evidence-based programming (FFT, Thinking for a Change), so the question becomes how to transition into this and collaborate.
- The recent proposal timeline was discussed, and MB agreed that more time was needed in the whole process, but she explained the "end of the current cycle" reasons for the shortened timeframes.
- MB was asked how we would be measuring program success, and she indicated that outcomes would be attached to our programs, and we would be evaluating those outcomes and asking questions to determine strengths of providers.
- It was mentioned that it would be difficult for the group to develop programming to reduce placements if frontline case managers are not informed of these initiatives. MB responded that the Practice Model would be rolling out Statewide, DCS continues to hire new staff, and DCS will be engaging, partnering, intervening, and working more closely with families from the very beginning once practice model is implemented in an effort to maintain more children in their homes.
- It was mentioned that it would be appreciated by the Judges if DCS Central Office was reminded that collaboration efforts are a "two-way street." Judges agreed that they "blindly agreed" to be involved in the RSC; however, legislation was presented during the most recent Session

which they were “not privy to.” It was stated that this makes it “difficult to want to collaborate.” MB indicated she would take that back to Central Office. She also indicated she feels that “something will happen” next year with the Budget issues, and Judges agreed they would like to have input into those types of proposed legislation.

- MB mentioned that criminal (FBI) checks for Foster Parents/Providers/Institutional employees who work with children are being developed. In response, it was stated that “immunity for workers doing their jobs” should also be explored as employees continue to have concerns regarding criminal/civil liability. MB stated that she feels there is a difference between workers not doing their jobs/lying in court versus informed decisions made at the time. She mentioned the increasing evidence supporting the effects of trauma on children when they are removed from their homes, and she stressed the need to teach this balancing of safety to staff.
- A question was asked regarding Probation’s involvement/representation on the RSC. Judges feel that we may be missing a key element by not including them on the Councils. MB indicates that Probation can attend the meetings, and it was felt initially that the Judges represented Probation on the Councils. She understood the concern and indicated this concern continues to be raised.
- What are some future tasks of the RSC? Responses included:
  1. Regional Services Councils will be a key to helping the Community Partners for Child Safety programs in the counties by identifying collaborators and community leaders for their involvement.
  2. RSC will need to be a part of the long-term vision, particularly because Child Welfare Services funding and Voluntary Services cases will be either changing or ceasing. Communities will need systems in place to assist with families otherwise assisted by those services.
  3. Regional Services Councils will be identifying needs and gaps in services. They will not only assist in securing services but monitoring them, as well.
  4. 11 outcome measures have been developed by regional managers. Regional Services Councils will be involved in determining how we are doing in each area. Central Office will need to respond to needs and provide the tools necessary to the RSC.
  5. It was suggested that 15-20 minutes of a RSC meeting be set aside for providers to present their programs (as well as a conscious effort made to deal with all of our various acronyms). In response, it was stated that we need to develop service standards first and

then open up our RSC meetings to providers to present to us based upon our needs as opposed to providers presenting their programs based upon what they perceive we need.

6. It was suggested that we do a better job Statewide in keeping true and accurate statistics and data. In response, many examples and needs were given: DMH/data management partnership under development with DCS (DDARS was also suggested); percentage of complaints in a specific county as compared to the rest of the State; the average income of the families where children are removed; progressive wraparound programs (Johnson County example); methamphetamine/drug stats; untreated diagnoses/mental health issues; domestic violence; Aging/Rehab services for our lower-functioning clients—more collaboration needed. It was also suggested to utilize local United Way organizations for needs assessments already performed in communities.
  - MB reported that a “report card” of sorts will be developed in the near future for institutions, and that new policy is forthcoming regarding foster parent licensing where more discretion will be allowed at the county level.
4. **Fourth Order of Business Summary of Discussion:** Each County Director reported his/her Child Welfare Services Agreements/Expenditures thus far for 2006. At the end, Jack Tandy made a motion to approve which was seconded by Heather Mollo. Motion carried.
  5. **Fifth Order of Business Summary of Discussion:** MB reminded all in attendance that by purchasing a Kids First license plate or making a donation to the Fund, prevention programs are supplemented State-wide. Kids First key chains were made available to those in attendance. The address to make a donation, without buying a license plate is:

**Kids First Trust Fund  
P.O. Box 6053  
Indianapolis IN 46206-0653**

**Next Meeting Date, Location and Time:** 5/16/06—Bartholomew County DCS—8:30 AM

**Meeting Adjourned at:** 10:15 AM